

University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

ScholarWorks @ UTRGV

Kika de la Garza Congressional Papers -
Newsletters

Kika de la Garza Congressional Papers

9-23-1985

Newsletter - 1985-09-23

E. De la Garza

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu/kikadelagarzanews>



Part of the [State and Local Government Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kika de la Garza Congressional Papers - Newsletters, UTRGV Digital Library, The University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Kika de la Garza Congressional Papers at ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. It has been accepted for inclusion in Kika de la Garza Congressional Papers - Newsletters by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UTRGV. For more information, please contact justin.white@utrgv.edu, william.flores01@utrgv.edu.

NEWSLETTER

99-1020

September 23, 1985

Washington, D C

FARM BILL MOVES TO HOUSE FLOOR. The farm bill authorizing a 5-year farm program is about to receive full House consideration soon.

In this connection, some will remember that several weeks ago in this space I wrote some lines on the nature of the national legislative process--and since the farm bill is coming up for its turn on the floor I would like to elaborate a little more about Congressional action on legislative bills.

Periodically there are stories or evaluations published about how many bills, or amendments to bills, that a Member of Congress has introduced and/or passed. This tends to give a distorted picture about the system and procedures in the U S Congress.

Unlike most state legislatures, a bill introduced into the U S House of Representatives becomes the responsibility of the committee with jurisdiction no matter who is the author of the bill. The bill's author then, for all intents and purposes, loses control of his or her bill since it is referred to a committee on which he might not be a member. Should the author not be a member of the committee which receives the bill for work, this makes passage all the more difficult.

A Member will offer testimony to the Committee in the hopes of improving his bill's chances. He'll talk to members of the committee to gain their support--but if the author is not a member of that particular committee, his chores are hard ones.

More often than not, the subject matter of his bill will lose its identity if the Committee incorporates it into what is called an "omnibus" measure. This is one where many bills of similar purpose are combined for easier consideration. And his bill may well be re-introduced a second time in what is called a "clean bill" put forward by the Chairman of the committee of jurisdiction, or by one of the Subcommittee Chairmen.

In the U S Congress--unlike many state bodies--legislation is initiated and completed through the committee process and not by individuals. When the bill is reported by the Committee and finally reaches the House floor--again the manager of the floor debate will be either the Committee Chairman or Subcommittee Chairman, not the bill's author (unless, of course, the author happens to be the Chairman).

At this point, other Members may try to add amendments--and generally the same procedure as for a bill applies except that Members under some rules can try to add amendments even when the bill is on the floor of the House and no longer in Committee.

Floor amendments can be misunderstood due to the fact that the amended matter should have been handled in Committee or Subcommittee. Thus, very few



—KIKI DE LA GARZA, 15TH DISTRICT, TEXAS—

floor amendments are introduced--but some are done for the purpose of delaying or weakening the bill, and some are even done to clarify a part of the bill which maybe had not been done in Committee (or a Member interested in a specific topic failed to do it in the Committee so he then has the opportunity to do so on the floor).

A Member's success or failure cannot be judged from just the number of bills or amendments introduced. The real success of a Member comes from his or her ability to refine thinking on a particular subject, proposing or defending ideas that are for the good of the country. In whatever form a measure finally emerges, if one of those ideas becomes law, the Member has been successful. These same procedures apply in the Senate as well as the House.

#

MEDALLION OF EXCELLENCE. Now that the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute dinner is over, I can say it was an evening full of surprises for your Congressman.

The Institute took this opportunity to confer a double honor on me. Together with three other Members of the group, I was the recipient of the Medallion of Excellence award--the first time this action has been taken.

To add to getting on cloud nine with honors, Congressman Bobby Garcia, representing the Institute, gave me a laminated and framed copy of the article WASHINGTON POST editorial writer Michael Barone did on me some weeks ago. This article features my Valley beginnings and legislative career.

The Institute put on a five star performance for this annual session--the largest in its history. Par American University President Dr Miguel A Nevarez participated extensively in the events. Congressional committees were engaged in specific hearings. President Nevarez testified at the hearings for the Committee on Education and Labor with Chairman Augustus Hawkins presiding about the impact of Title III on Hispanics in higher education. I was a member of the panel. President Nevarez was the principal speaker at a Department of Energy breakfast honoring National Hispanic Heritage Week. I also attended this.

Also among the highlights was a fashion show featuring Spanish surnamed designers. World renowned designer Oscar de la Renta was one of those whose fashions were presented. There was a black tie dinner for him at the Embassy of the Dominican Republic. Ambassador and Mrs Eulogio Santaella were host and hostess.

The Ambassador from Spain, His Excellency Gabriel Manueco, and his wife entertained with an outstanding reception at his residence to close the week's events. The President's annual barbecue for Members of Congress at the White House made it impossible for me to attend the Spanish Embassy affair--but it was notable for the hospitality and international friendship it displayed and the excellence of the cuisine.

#

THE JOHN H SHARY COLLECTION. For someone who knew about this legendary figure when I was a boy, I was honored again when asked to be the speaker at the dinner Saturday, September 23, when the Valley Historical Collection commemorates its receipt of the John H Shary Collection.

Going down in history as the original developer of the Texas Citrus Industry and the Upper Valley, Mr Shary started his operations when the present century was a little more than 12 years old. After the Vela family planted the first seeds Mr Shary started the first large scale commercial citrus orchard in the Valley in 1915--envisioning then how that arid brush could be transformed into a miracle of Texas agricultural production.

Realizing the need for that delta soil to have water to reach its fulfillment, he built one of the first Valley irrigation systems, now serving over 55,000 acres of land. To his fellow townsmen in Mission he left a municipal golf course, airport, baseball park and two recreation parks and playgrounds.

When President Eisenhower came to the Valley to dedicate Falcon Dam, he stayed at the Shary home, still located on the road bearing his name. His only child MariaAlice married a young member of the Texas legislature, Allan Shivers, who became one of the state's outstanding governors. The Shary mark will long endure.

The dedication of his memorabilia will take place in the Pan American University Library--and it will be a pleasure to participate in this excellent event.

#

VISITORS FROM SOUTH TEXAS: Mr & Mrs Leroy Buegeler of Alice; Mr & Mrs Robert Engelhardt of Donna; Dr. ~~U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515~~ Mrs Lonnie M Kieffer of Edinburg; Mr Jack Bruce of Floresville; Mr John Kutzenberg and Mr Jack Nelson of Harlingen; Mr Blaine L Schorp of Jourdan; Mr Gary Sollner of McAllen; Mr John Murry of Pearsall; Mr & Mrs Mel Foster and Mr & Mrs E P Holley, Jr of Poteet; Mr Sam Vale of Rio Grande City; and Mr Charles Ellis of Sinton.